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Joint Institution Lecture Series

Microchipping People – The Risks

Hosted by: IEEE (NSW Section)

Joint Institution Lecture Series

Microchipping People: The Risks

There is nothing new about placing materials into the human body for prosthetic purposes. Since 1959 when an internal pacemaker was implanted into a patient, we have seen a proliferation of biomedical devices made from different chemical compositions (e.g. chromium, nickel, cobalt, titanium). Over this time, the implants have become much smaller in size, some manufacturers are even calling for their insertion into every human for personalised medicine.

We hear that implants are now not only surgically placed in the heart or joints or ears, but since 1987 have made their debut also in the brain and retina. There are now a diverse range of use cases of passive implantable devices in the form of RF identification tags, marketed for multi-applications like identity tokens and physical access controllers. While we have a grasp of the known risks associated with biomedical devices, the risks associated with the open market of embedding microchips in voluntary participants is less understood.

Most do-it-yourselfer implantees will say: “if it’s good enough for my dog or cat, then it’s good enough for me”. Are the risks surrounding implantables (medical and non-medical) exaggerated or do we need further research to ascertain their short-term and long-term effects on the human body?

This presentation will discuss the risks associated with microchipping people for any reason, and will consider what the normalisation of biomedical devices for non-medical applications might mean in society at large in terms of risk.

About the Speaker

Professor Katina Michael, School of Computing & IT, University of Wollongong:

Joined UOW in 2002. Prior to joining UOW, Katina spent 5 years working at Nortel Networks as a senior engineer. She researches emerging technologies, societal implications, and national security. Katina is a senior member of the IEEE and has held several editorial roles, among them chief editor of *IEEE Technology & Society Magazine*, and *IEEE Consumer Electronics Magazine*. PhD, MTransCrimPrev, BIT. www.katinamichael.com.

VENUE

Harricks Auditorium
8 Thomas Street
Chatswood NSW 2068

DATE & TIME

Thursday 8 March 2018
5.30 pm for a 6.00 pm start

Light refreshments will be
provided prior to the presentation.
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